



Strengthening Systems at Grassroots.



STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS AT GRASSROOTS

Over the years, VHS has been active in providing seed funds to upcoming community based organisations. The community systems strengthening (CSS) seed advocacy grant has been in its second phase of implementation in 2017, and in the previous years we have had great feedback and responses from transgender communities we've worked with. We completed Phase 1 between 2015 and 2016, and have worked closely to ensure tremendous success in our areas and a few of them will be discussed briefly below.

The efforts in providing a seed fund do not exist in isolation. The seed fund grants aim to improve the innate skills within CBO's to strengthen them further in their advocacy initiatives and administration. Further it also aims to ensure effective impact in the activities CBOs' implement, liaison or lobbying with government officials and other policy makers. We have worked with 11 CBO's across the six States of India.

THOZHI - TAMIL NADU

In 2015, we worked with a Chennai based CBO, Thozhi after providing them a CSS seed advocacy grant. Their proposal suggested a variety of activities that they were interested in implementing such as, media sensitisation, promoting transgender specific IEC materials, sensitisation to educational institutions, corporate officials, and developing second line leaders for advocacy efforts. These were listed by the



Thozhi following their Community Ambassadors training program

LOVELAND ARTS SOCIETY - KERALA

In 2015, we provided seed advocacy grant to the CBO- Loveland Arts Society (LAS) in Kerala. This CBO proposed activities in line with their requirements based on existing needs within their community. They conducted a sensitisation workshop for media personnel in their district, during which they invited the Head of the district Jilla Panchayat as Chief Guest. Impressed with the relevance of the topic on transgender, and their quality of the workshop, the President of the Jilla Panchayat called them to discuss further prospects the very next day.

The Loveland Arts Society also went on to conduct a sensitisation workshop for all members of the Panchayat board and successfully advocated for the allotment of 10 Lakh rupees for the welfare of the transgender community in their district. Transgender people can now approach LAS, in case they require initial capital while starting out business, loans for personal settlements, individual skill building and other such livelihood activities focused in developing the transgender community. Following this, in 2016,

The Loveland Arts Society, a CBO based in Kollam, Kerala, was able to advocate for the allocation of 10 Lakh rupees for the welfare of the transgender community with their district Panchayat Raj Institution.

the Jilla Panchayat, has allocated another 55 lakh rupees for ensuring housing provisions for transgender people within their district. This project is currently underway and we hope to share great news in the future.



Loveland Arts Society conducting their Media Sensitisation programme

CBO based on their assessment of needs in their district.

The activities implemented under this grant yielded

results not just limited to objectives but also extended beyond the workshop and training room. Thozhi was able to make impact from their activities and they are briefly discussed below.

Activity	Results
Developing Community Ambassadors or Second Line Leaders	Lobbied with the Tamil Nadu Housing board (TNHB) for the allocation of housing for transgender people. They successfully provisioned 237 houses for transgender people by TNHB.
Media Personnel Sensitisation	They conducted a sensitisation program with the Tamil Nadu Press and Broadcasting Club in order to seek and promote activities that engage Transgender people in popular media as well as depict them in a positive manner.
IEC material promotion	The CBO developed positive information on transgender individuals and facilitated its mass representation. Through this campaign, an auto driver has agreed to donate 500 rupees of his income to the welfare of a single transgender, every month.
Educational Institution Sensitisation	Following a sensitisation programme at Loyola College, the reputed educational institution has accepted admissions for transgender people for their university courses.

SAKHA - ODISHA

We've also worked with the transgender CBO SAKHA, based in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The President of the CBO, Mx. Meera Parida has been well recognised for her work in advocating for Transgender Human Rights in the field of HIV/AIDS. She has also received an award in recognition of her work from the Honorable Chief Minister of the State, Mr. Naveen Patnaik.



Meera Parida receiving her recognition award from the Honorable Chief Minister of Odisha, Mr. Naveen Patnaik

Activity	Results
Developing Community Ambassadors or Second Line Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members who were trained, developed a written memorandum and had them submitted to the District Collector. Their requests were in line with facilitating the creation of a separate Transgender Welfare Board. Two transgender members have taken up jobs as auto drivers following the program. The Traffic department has also appointed 5 transgender people as traffic volunteers following lobbying efforts of the community Ambassadors.

Sensitisation to Panchayat Raj Institutions	Two transgender community members have also been appointed as members of the Transgender Welfare Committee at the Government office.
Sensitisation to Government Officers	The workshop was held with the Commissioner of Bhubaneswar Municipality. The Commissioner issued an order requiring all municipal staff to attend a sensitisation program conducted by SAKHA.
Media Personnel Sensitisation	Conducted a media sensitisation programme for local media personnel, following which there has been an increase in positive stories covered on transgender people. The media is also keen on keeping to date with new schemes for transgender people as well as local cases and disputes.

EKTA SEVA SANSTHAN - UTTAR PRADESH

We worked with ESS in 2017 following their CSS grant proposal, to initiate a series of sensitisation programmes with healthcare providers, judicial members and panchayat raj institutions. The results following these activities are found to be successful in Uttar Pradesh.

Activity	Results
Healthcare Providers Sensitisation	Dr. Upadhyay, Superintendent Officer of the district hospital of Khushinagar announced opportunities for recruiting transgender people in suitable positions at the hospital.
IEC material promotion	Developed a document showcasing the achievements of community leaders and transgender individuals in Uttar Pradesh.

This document showcases achievements and activities during the first phase of our implementation. We are currently pursuing efforts for the successful completion of phase two, where we are working in entire India (Except North East).



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